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MEHRDAD SHOKOOHY

SASANIAN ROYAL EMBLEMS AND THEIR REEMERGENCE IN THE FOURTEENTH-CENTURY DECCAN

In the fourteenth century in the Deccan in Central India, a well-known Sultanate dynasty was established whose sultans called themselves Bahmani. They claimed to be descended from the Sasanians, and in their buildings they decorated the crowns of the arches with a device which varies in its details, but has as its main components two open wings surmounted by a crescent and sometimes a disk that closely resembles the emblems on the crowns of the Sasanian emperors. At a period when there is little evidence that the Sasanian royal emblems were still known to the Persian-speaking world[1] it is difficult to see how the Bahmani sultans could have been aware of them. Yet the close resemblance between the Bahmani motifs and those on the Sasanian crowns should not be dismissed as merely coincidental. So far scholars have offered no explanation for the origin of the motif or its probable connection with the Bahmani's claim of noble origin.[2]

To what extent the Bahmani claim had any validity is not certain. The founder of the dynasty, which lasted for nearly two centuries, was Zafar Khan Hasan Gangu, a Persian adventurer at the Delhi court. Muhammad b. Tughluq made him governor of Gulbarga, from where he led a successful rebellion against the sultan in 1347–48. Zafar Khan claimed to be a descendant of Bahman the son of Isfandiar,[3] through his lineage with Bahram Gur.[4] In the works of the early Muslim historians, who used the *Khudāy nāma* and other Sasanian sources, Bahman appears as a real historical character, while his legendary life is celebrated in Firdawsi's *Shāhnāma*, which in the fourteenth century was regarded as the standard history of pre-Islamic Iran. According to A. D. H. Bivar, the legends of Bahman may indeed have some historical basis, and may allude to the post-Alexandrian power struggle in northern Iran between Eumenes (*whwmn*), the former secretary of Alexander, and Antigonus, Alexander's successor.[5]

In the court of Delhi in the fourteenth century Zafar Khan was not the only personage who claimed a noble origin. Ibn Battuta records that at the time of Muhammad b. Tughluq the governor of Qanuj was Amir Firuz Badakhshani, who traced his genealogy back to Bahram Gur.[6] Malik Karay, another personage at the court, also claimed descent from Bahram Gur.[7] A third was Amir Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Qahir, a descendant of the Abbasid Caliph al-Mustansar.[8] In fact Delhi was full of Arab and Persian fortune hunters who had heard of the gold of India and left their homelands to seek wealth and power at the sultan's court. Muhammad b. Tughluq, whose brutality matched his generosity, welcomed them and often gave them more than they deserved, but he frowned upon any one who ever wished to leave his court. Some who tried to escape in secret paid the price with their lives.[9] Many others, such as Zafar Khan, stayed and were raised to positions of power.

The earliest Bahmani buildings are in Gulbarga, which was made the capital of the sultanate until 1424 when the ninth sultan, Ahmad Shah Wali (1422–36), moved his capital to his newly reconstructed town of Bidar. The early examples of the winged motif are therefore to be found on the arches of the buildings of Gulbarga, particularly in the few original structures inside the fort and on the tombs attributed to the first sultans, situated to the west of the town.[10] A good example of the device is on the exterior of the entrance arches of a square tomb chamber distinguished by its segmented melon-shaped dome.[11] The emblem (fig. 1) consists of two winged forms with foliated decoration on the wings, spreading upwards and outwards and cradling the crescent moon, within which is a disk carved in the form of a

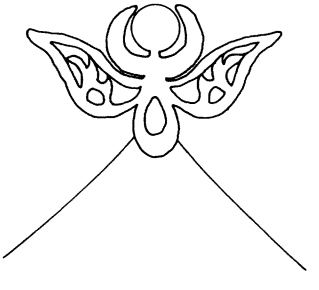

Fig. 1. Motif on the entrance arch of an anonymous tomb chamber with a segmented dome in Gulbarga.

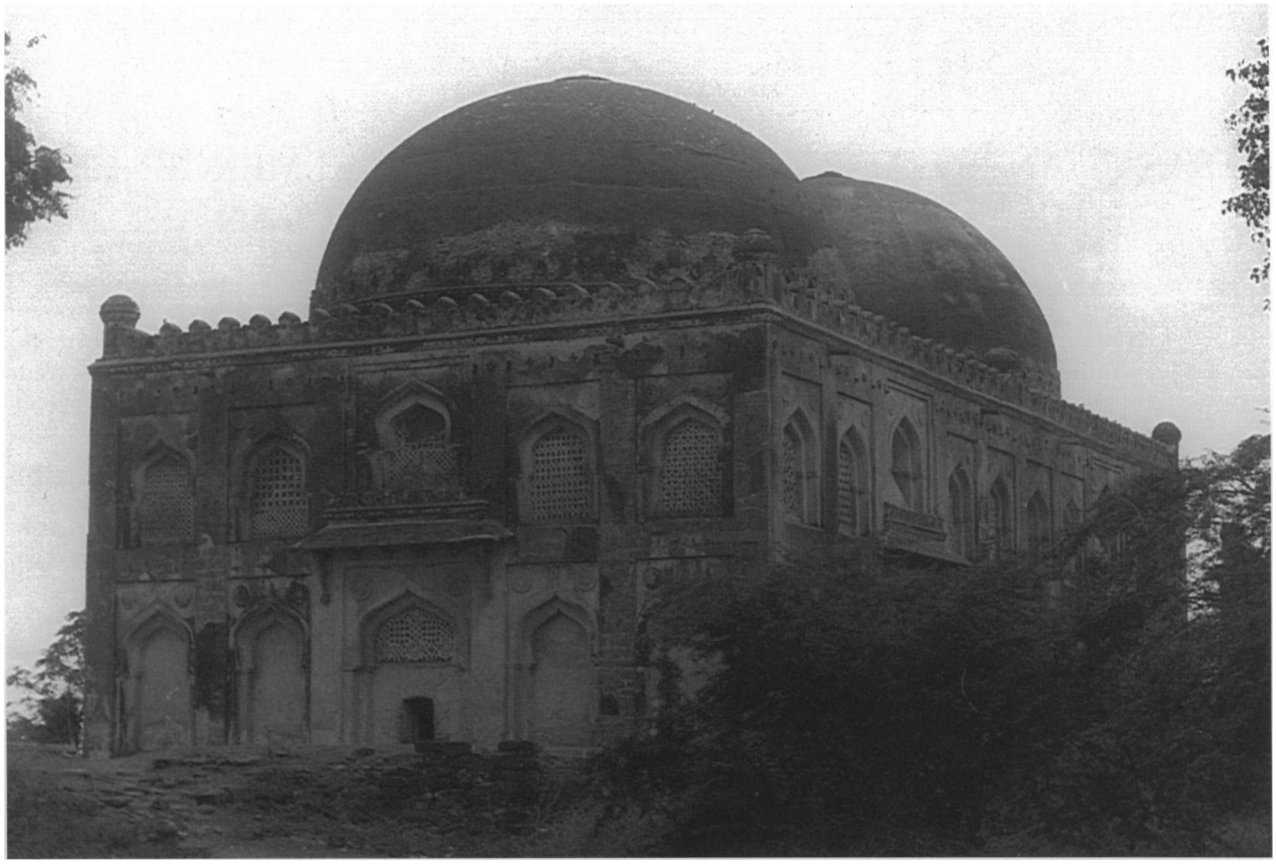

Fig. 2. Tomb of Firuz Shah Bahmani. General view.

rosette. A similar motif also appears in the interior of the tomb of Firuz Shah Bahmani,[12] in Haft Gunbad, the necropolis of the later sultans, situated to the east of the town.

While the general form of the motif always remains the same, the details vary in different buildings and sometimes among the motifs on a single building. For example, in the tomb of Firuz Shah Bahmani (fig. 2) the motifs on the interior over all the arches, including those of the squinches, differ slightly from each other, and some have the word *Allāh* in the center. On the exterior the motifs (figs. 3 and 4) are quite different and are simplified. They appear over the niches and windows on two levels, and although each motif varies slightly from the others, they all fall into two general categories: those with the wings stretched outwards, and those with the wings pointing upwards. In both forms the surface of the wings is plain and the outline foliated. The disk is absent, but the crescent is designed so that its center is in the form of a circle. In another building, an anonymous and little-known tomb chamber (figs. 5 and 6) south of the fort and now in the middle of the built-up area of Gulbarga, the crescent is more pronounced, and its center is circular, again bearing the word *Allāh* carved in relief (fig. 7). The word suggests that there was a religious symbolism behind the motif, as was indeed the case with the Sasanian emblems. The tomb seems to date from the early decades of the Bahmani period, and probably belongs to one of the first Bahmani sultans. The winged form on this tomb chamber is more compact, and the

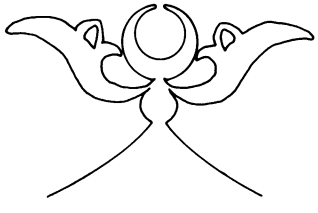

Fig. 3. Tomb of Firuz Shah Bahmani. One of the motifs on the exterior of the arches.

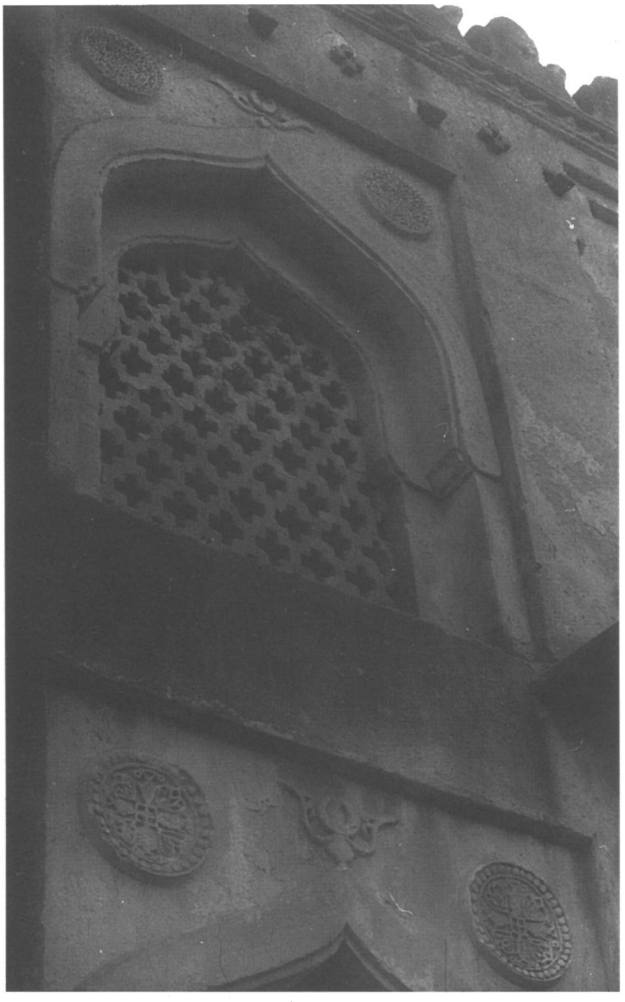

Fig. 4. Tomb of Firuz Shah Bahmani. Motifs on the exterior arches.

whole motif is comparable to the emblem on the crown of Piruz I, shown on some of his coins,[13] where the crescent almost touches the sphere, an arrangement which is not common to all Sasanian crowns.

In the Deccan the motif is seen in a variety of forms, and most Bahmani buildings, whether religious or secular, display one or more versions. In the fort of Gulbarga, for example, the device is present on the arches of the shops in the bazaar leading to the western gate. The example illustrated here (fig. 8) is particularly interesting, as the outward curve of each wing and a twist in the foliation of the tips is carried out in a manner which gives the impression of a flying bird to each wing, an allusion, perhaps, to the true function of wings. In this example the space within the crescent is filled with a three-petaled flower. Variations on this pattern can be found in many later motifs, for example in the mosque of Kamali Mujarrad where the wings and the floral pattern are simplified and the crescent moon is more pronounced (fig. 9).

As with the Bahmani motifs the Sasanian emblems appear in great variety. The problems associated with reading Pahlavi texts and monograms on coins have in fact made the distinctive features of the emblem of each crown a useful source for distinguishing the emperors not only on their coins but also on bas reliefs and uninscribed silver ware. Most scholars agree that each component of the Sasanian emblems represents a particular religious symbol, but their views on the meaning of each symbol vary. For example, Edith Porada[14] associates the wings with Verethraghna and later Anahita, merlons around the crown with Ahura Mazda, the moon with the *izad* Mah, and other features with other divine beings. Phyllis Ackerman[15] notes that "the Sasanian king displayed on his crown sky, sun, and moon emblems. Thus his official headdress proclaimed him descendant of the sun and the moon."

In Near Eastern cultures the representation of wings, crescent, and sphere or disk goes back far beyond Sasanian times, and can be traced to the first millennium B.C. and even earlier. In the Assyrian reliefs and paintings the devices are usually placed above the head of the king and denote the main deities. The features, however, are not combined but are set in a row, representing the deities in the form of the moon, the sun, and the wings of Assur the protector god of the Assyrians. Apart from these three, other deities are also sometimes present. For example, on a stele of Assurnasirpal II from Nimrod three extra deities are represented,[16] as is the case with a stele of Shalamneser III from Kurkh, and many others.[17] However, the symbols of the additional deities vary, indicating that each king chose to represent only those whom he believed to be his main protectors. One of the more common additional deities is shown as a star,[18] probably a representation of Sirius, which, as we shall see, also appears in many Sasanian coins.

The earliest known device combining the three main elements is seen in the Assyro-Urartan culture in the symbols above the head of the god Tishub.[19] The order of the form is close to that of the Sasanian and Bahmani motifs, and consists of the wings surmounted by the crescent which cradles the disk. It would be hard to believe that the Sasanians were aware of the Mesopotamian motif of over a thousand years earlier, however. The Sasanian motif had developed slowly, with each of the main components being gradually incorporated into the crowns.

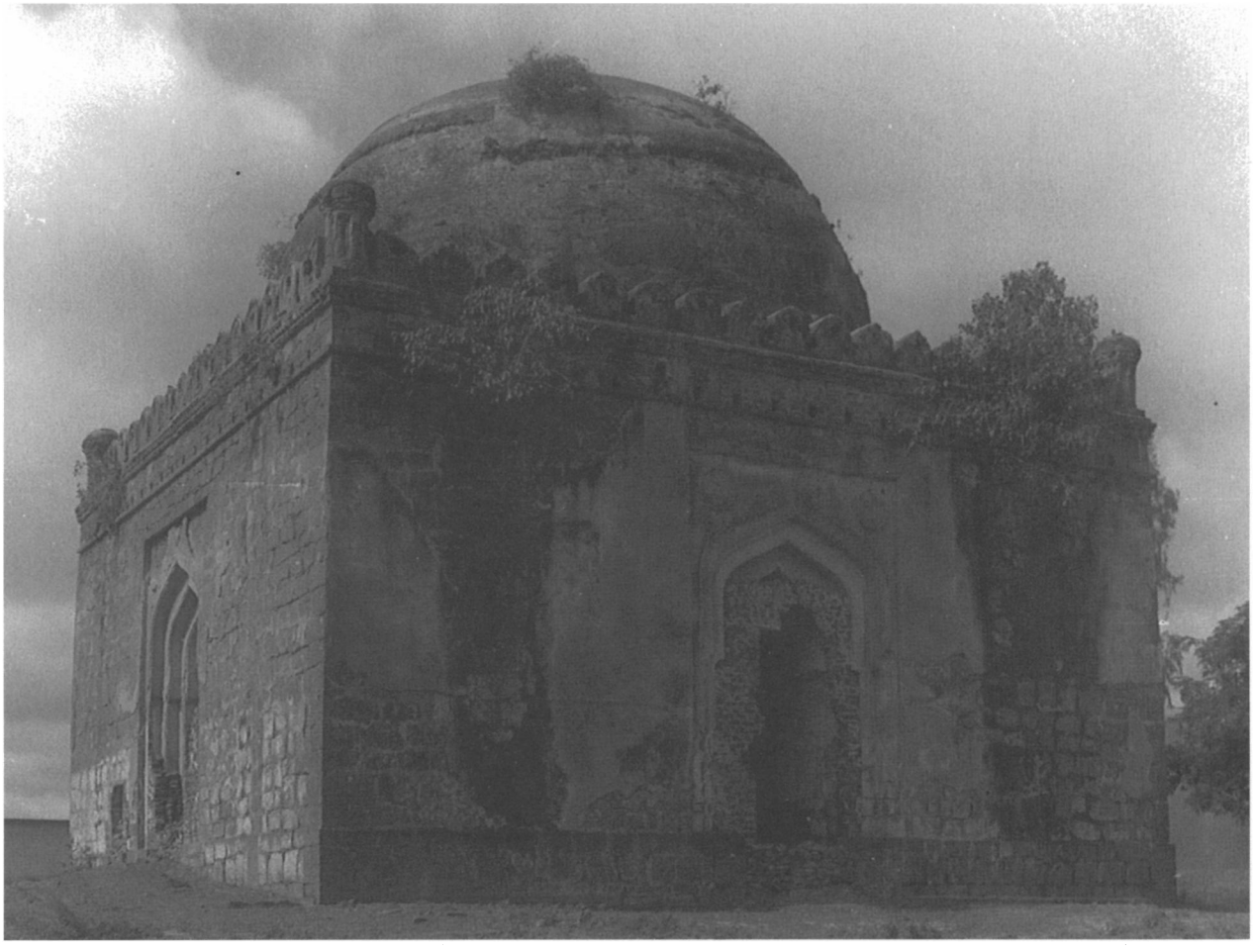

Fig. 5. An anonymous tomb in Gulbarga town, south of the fort. General view.

The winged motif commonly represented in Mesopotamian culture is, of course, in the form of a ring with a bird's wings and tail. In Achaemenid Iran, while the older Mesopotamian form occasionally appears, the more predominant form is a bearded man with wings. The figure is commonly regarded as a representation of Ahura Mazda, and as in the Mesopotamian examples it is placed above the scenes which contain the figure of the king. Whenever the older, winged ring is presented, it is below the winged man, usually in a different frame but still above the head of the king. This lower winged symbol may be a representation of the royal Frawahr who is the heavenly link between the king and Ahura Mazda.[20]

Unlike the Mesopotamian reliefs, the early Achaemenid works never display the symbols of disk and crescent, and the sole deity represented is the winged figure, to confirm their inscriptions which mention Ahura Mazda, but never give the name of any other deity. On the tomb of Artaxerxes II or III, to the right of Ahura Mazda, however, is the bas relief of a crescent cradling a sphere. This is a significant departure from the Achaemenid tradition, particularly when compared with the inscriptions of Artaxerxes II, who acknowledges not only Ahura Mazda, but also Mithra and Anahita.[21] It is usually considered that at the end of the Achaemenid period the cults of Mithra and Anahita, which were probably always strong in Iranian society, influenced the royal monotheistic religion. In the case of this relief it seems that the sphere represents Mithra and the crescent Anahita.

The association of the sphere or the sun disk with Mithra is perhaps more obvious. Although in the Avesta the sun and the moon are two separate divine beings (*izad*) with their own prayer chapters relating to the appropriate rituals (*yasht*), in the *yasht* dedicated to the sun

Fig. 6. Anonymous tomb in Gulbarga. Interior.

prayers are offered to both the sun and Mithra. The association of the two *īzad*s and the celebration of the birth of the sun on the festive days of *mihragān* (*mithrakana*) was also well known to ancient historians[22] as well as to early Muslim scholars. Al-Biruni records:

> Mihr is the name of the sun, who is said to have for the first time appeared to the world on this day; that therefore this day was called Mihr. This is indicated by the custom of the Kisras of crowning themselves on this day with a crown on which was worked an image of the sun. On the same day, they say, God spread out the earth and created the bodies as mansions for the souls. In a certain hour of this day the sphere of Ifranjawi breathes for the purpose of rearing the bodies.
>
> On the same day God is said to have clad the moon in her splendour and to have illuminated her with light, after He had created her as a black ball without any light. Therefore, they say, on Mihrajan the moon stands higher than the sun, and the luckiest hours of the day are those of the moon.[23]

The association of the word *mihr* (Mithra) with the sphere survived in Iran after Islam, and even today the silver or brass sphere set above the standards carried during the processions of *ʿāshūrā* is called a *mihr*.[24]

The association of the crescent moon with Anahita is

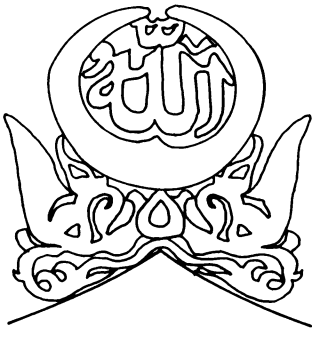

Fig. 7. Motif of the arch of the anonymous tomb in Gulbarga.

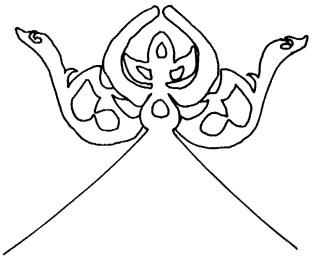

Fig. 8. Motif on a shop in the bazaar of Gulbarga Fort.

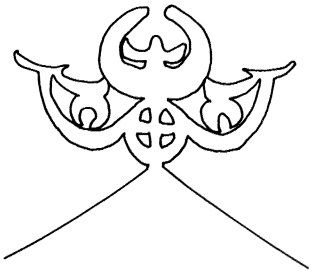

Fig. 9. Motif over an arch on the eastern façade of Kamali Mujarrad Mosque, Gulbarga.

not as readily obvious as that of the sphere with Mithra, but there are a number of indications that lead us towards making this connection. Both in the Achaemenid and the Sasanian period, whenever there is a known reference to Anahita the symbol of the crescent seems also to be present. We have already noted such an example in the tomb of Artaxerxes. In the Sasanian carvings of Taq-i Bustan the connection between the two can also be observed. The main vault of Taq-i Bustan is devoted to presenting the investiture of an emperor, probably Piruz I (457–83), by Ahura Mazda and Anahita.[25] On the façade (fig. 10) the arch of the vault is crowned by the crescent and two fluttering scarves, which represent the divine diadem, and were an alternative to the wings of Ahura Mazda. The Sasanian emperors are always shown with a royal diadem of this kind, which is tied at the back of the head. The divine diadem can also appear in the crowns of the kings,[26] and in the case of Qubad, for example, it takes the place of the wings.[27] In Taq-i Bustan the emperor himself wears a crown surmounted by the wings, the crescent, and the sphere (fig. 11), in a form closely comparable to the later Bahmani emblems.

In the Avesta no mention is made of Anahita in the short *yasht* devoted to the moon, but there are certain similarities between the two deities. Anahita is the deity of water and a mother goddess, protector of mankind and responsible for the birth of human beings;[28] the moon is the deity of the reproduction of animals,[29] as well as being responsible for the tides of the sea. The connection of the moon with the cult of the mother goddess may be even more deeply rooted in Near Eastern culture, and its manifestation in Christianity may be seen, for example, in the symbolism of the crescent in the iconography of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, together with her other attributes such as stars and the fountain of living water and her title Stella Maris.[30]

Whatever the true meaning of the moon of the Sasanian crowns may be, this feature was not a part of their emblems at the beginning.[31] In fact the form of emblems of the Sasanian crowns went through various changes during the life of the dynasty. The sphere is seen from the very beginning on the crown of Ardashir I,[32] the founder of the dynasty, but it took several generations for the other elements to appear. The wings are first presented on the crown of Bahram II (276–93),[33] and the crescent is first seen on the crown of Yazdigird I (399–420) and at the same period on the crown of Shapur the king of Armenia.[34] At this time the crescent is a small feature set in front of the crown and not under the sphere. On Yazdigird's crown the wings are replaced with the diadem in the form of the scarf fluttering behind the sphere. It is only at the time of Bahram V (Bahram Gur) (420–38) that the moon is shown under the sphere, but without the wings.[35] The complete form, with the wings and the moon cradling the sphere, finally appears two generations later on the crown of Piruz I.[36] In later Sasanian crowns the sphere is first replaced by what seems to be a bowl of flame, and later, from the time of Khusrau II

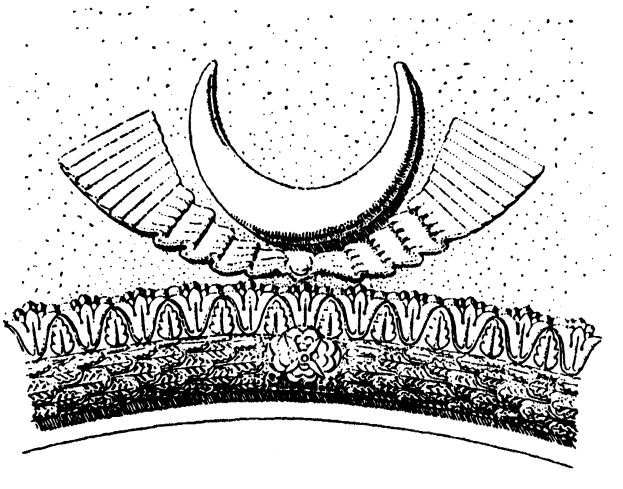

Fig. 10. Motif on the apex of the arch at Taq-i Bustan. (After Reuter)

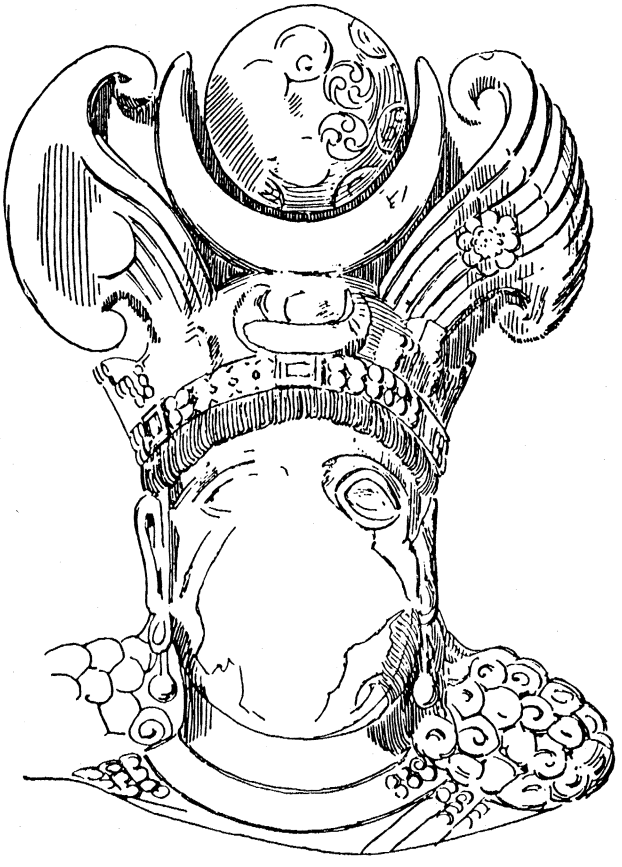

Fig. 11. Taq-i Bustan. Emperor's head. (Drawing: After Herzfeld)

Fig. 12. Coin of Khusrau II with the additional word *bismillāh,* as used in the early Islamic period. (Private collection)

(Khusrau Parwiz) onwards, by a six-pointed star.[37] The example of the coin of Khusrau II illustrated here (fig. 12) is from the Bishapur mint, the dies of which were reused by the Arabs in the early years of their rule, and on the margin the word *bismillāh* has been added.

The changes of the emblems on Sasanian crowns may not be without significance, and may be closely associated with the social and religious conditions of the time. For example, the appearance of the moon on Bahram's crown may be associated with the events which followed the death of his father Yazdigird I. The nobles, apparently supported by the people, revolted against the royal family and set on the throne a Khusrau of a different lineage to Ardashir I. Bahram, who was in Arabia, took his force to the capital and reestablished the authority of the Sasanian house. His legendary feat of reclaiming the Sasanian crown by snatching it from between two lions may have been invented to emphasize his divine legitimacy to the throne. The change of the emblem on his crown may also reflect the gradual reemergence of the cult of Anahita in the Zoroastrian world which, since Parthian times and perhaps earlier, was dominated by the cult of Mithra.

The omission of the sphere by Khusrau Parwiz may also be associated with the late Sasanian internecine conflicts which came to a peak with the rebellion of the army commander Bahram Chubin, and ended with his defeat by Khusrau, but only after a long struggle. The star in Khusrau's crown and that of his descendants seems to represent Tishtar (most probably Sirius), a companion deity of the moon[38] and a protector of water, particularly rainfall and springs.[39] In this respect Tishtar is closely associated with Anahita, the main deity of water.

The adoption of the star and the crescent as a symbol by the western Islamic world is well known, but in the Bahmani emblems the star is never represented instead of the disk. If we agree that the similarity of the Bahmani motif with the earlier Sasanian emblems is not a coincidence, the question remains as to how Hasan Gangu and his immediate descendants could be aware of the Sasanian motif. It is of course possible to presume that while Hasan was in Iran he might have seen Sasanian coins. Such coins are still found in great quantities, and must have been even more frequently discovered in the past. As we have noted, Sasanian emblems also appear on silver bowls. Examples of Sasanian coins or perhaps silver

Fig. 13. Sasanian ossuary fragment showing an arch crowned with a motif. (Photo: A. U. Pope, *Survey of Persian Art*, pl. 145 G.)

ware could have been in Hasan Gangu's possession, and he might have taken the idea of his symbol from such pieces. However, if he were familiar with Sasanian coins, one would expect him to have imitated their forms on his own coins, or to have produced a Sasanian-style crown for himself. In fact the Bahmani coins show no trace of Sasanian influence, and in their layout and inscriptions follow the tradition of the earlier Sultanate coinage.[40] Nor do we have any evidence that the Bahmani sultans had crowns resembling those of the Sasanians. We have, therefore, little choice but to conclude that the winged symbol was only used on the Bahmani arches, even if its linkage with the Sasanian emblems was

Fig. 14. Early Christian cross with Pahlavi inscription at St. Thomas near Madras. (Drawing: After Yule)

understood. If this is the case the Bahmanis must have had reasons to associate the motif with arches in the first place, and perhaps copied it from earlier symbols which crowned Sasanian arches.

Today there are very few existing Sasanian arches which have preserved their stucco cover or stone casing. Those that have survived, such as the famous arches of Firuzabad with representations of Persepolitan style architraves above[41] and the Roman-looking niches found in Bishapur,[42] do not have the royal emblems on their crown. However, it seems that the crowns of many Sasanian arches were decorated with such symbols. We have already noted the arch crowned with a scarf and crescent at Taq-i Bustan. The arch carved in stone is clearly an imitation of a royal iwan, and we may presume that many iwans were decorated with such emblems. A Sasanian ossuary fragment has also been found,[43] decorated in relief with a human figure standing in an arch, with the arch crowned with such a motif (fig. 13). In this case the crescent rests on the diadem and cradles a circle with a rosette which must represent the sun or the star Tishtar. There is little doubt that on the ossuary the arch represents a door or a niche, and the similarity between the emblem crowning this arch and those of the Bahmanis is striking.

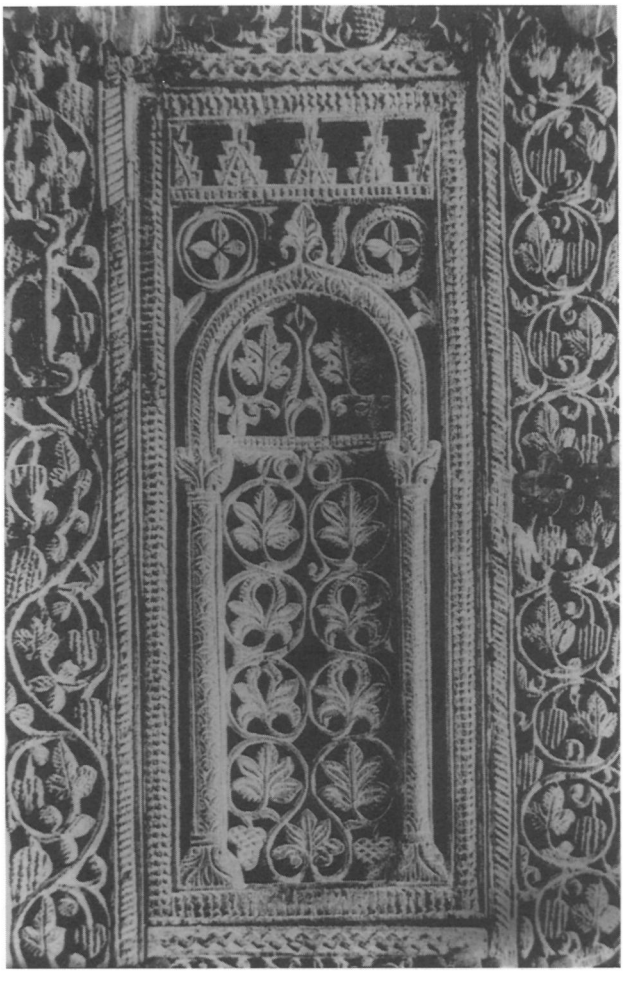

Fig. 15. Detail of an arch carved on a wooden panel of the minbar of the Great Mosque of Qairawan. (Photo: K. A. C. Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture,* pl. 89d)

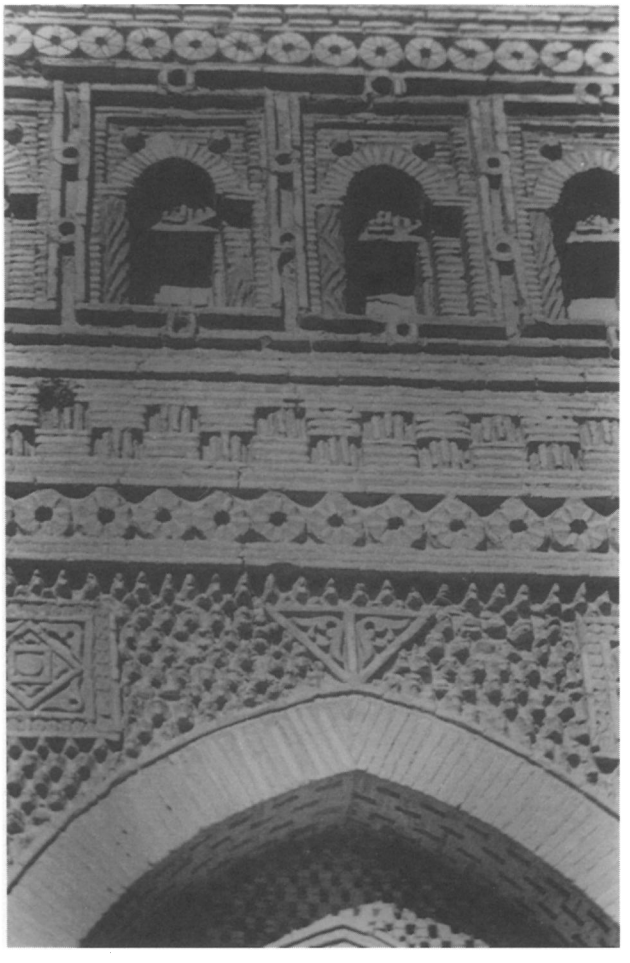

Fig. 16. Bukhara. Tomb of Ismaʿil Samani, motif over the entrance.

The best representation of wings crowning the Sasanian-type arches can be found, surprisingly, in India, in a carving of the early Christians who came from the Sasanian and post-Sasanian lands and settled in Ceylon[44] and on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts. The Bahmanis had, of course, no control over these areas well to the south of their territory, and there is no evidence to show that they had any knowledge of the existence of these Christian communities, let alone their association with the Sasanians. Nevertheless, on the coasts of South India a number of Sasano-Christian crosses, carved on stone tablets and with Pahlavi inscriptions are preserved.[45] The example which concerns us is the cross of St. Thomas near Madras (fig. 14). In this example the cross is carved to appear as a free-standing object fitted on a base, and above it is the Holy Ghost represented as a dove diving down towards the cross. The cross is within a Sasanian style semicircular arched niche supported by two columns, and above the arch are the two familiar wings. Framing the arch is the Pahlavi inscription with a religious text which includes a rare record of the word Messiah in Middle Persian. The composition of the arch is not only in the Sasanian style, but the position of the wings above the cross and the dove — the Son and the Holy Ghost — leave little doubt that the wings do indeed represent God the Father, and in the case of the Sasanian emblems Ahura Mazda.

While, as already noted, the Bahmanis could not have been aware of the existence of the motif in South India, in the fourteenth century there were still a great number of Sasanian buildings standing in the Iranian world. Although already in disrepair, they must have been in a

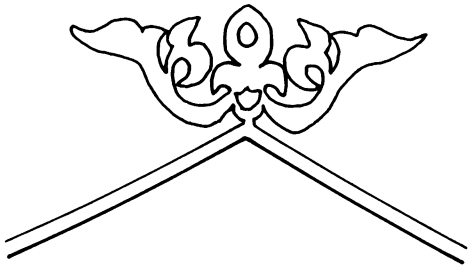

Fig. 17. Chor Gunbad. Motif on the chatries of the roof.

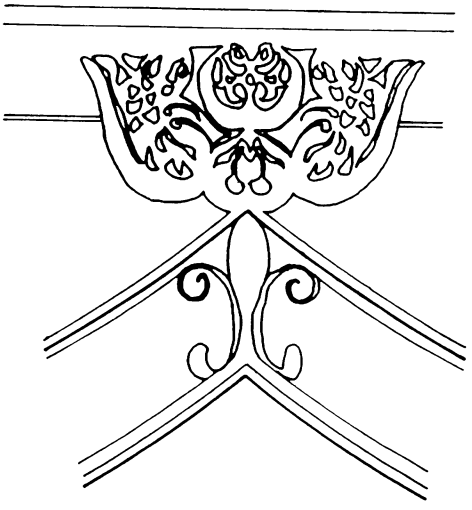

Fig. 18. Chor Gunbad. Interior. Painted motif over the arches.

better state of preservation than they are today, and many of their arches could still have had their stucco decoration, sometimes crowned with these emblems. It may well have been these arches that Hasan Bahman Shah saw in Iran, before imitating them in India.

The Sasanian tradition also seems to have continued in the early Islamic period, and a similar motif crowns an arch carved on a panel of the minbar of the Great Mosque of Qairawan[46] (fig. 15). In this example, however, the form of the motif departs from the Sasanian emblem, and the wings are in the form of two narrow upward-pointing leaves, with the central motif in the form of a larger leaf. Another interesting feature of the arch is the representation of the Sasanian-style battlements

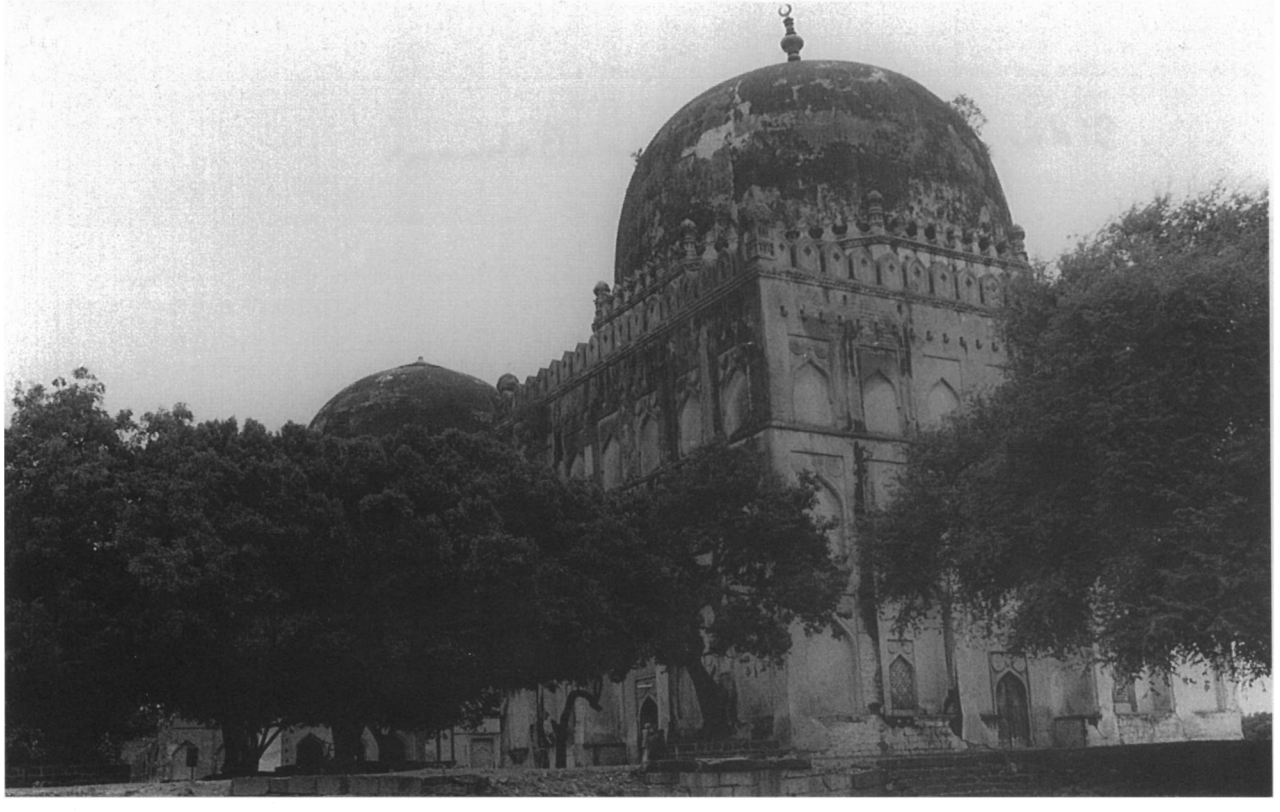

Fig. 19. Bidar. Tomb of Ahmad Shah Wali. General view.

Fig. 20. Tomb of Ahmad Shah Wali. Motif over entrance.

above the arch. Such battlements were, of course, widely used in the buildings of the Umayyads and the Abbasids.

The winged motif appears to have continued in use on the early Islamic buildings of Iran, particularly in Khurasan, and a stylized version of it, in the form of two attached triangles, crowns the main arches of the well-known tomb of Ismaʿil the Samanid (fig. 16). The feature is much simplified, perhaps to render it in carved brick; nevertheless its use over the arch is significant as, like the Bahmanis, the Samanids also claimed Sasanian origin, and the feature on the tomb chamber may also be an allusion to this lineage.

It is, therefore, possible to assume that when Hasan Gangu was in Iran or Khurasan he became familiar with the winged motif from seeing so many early Islamic and Sasanian standing arches. The association of the motif with the Sasanians would have been obvious, although the original symbolism of the components of the motif could have been forgotten. When Hasan gained power in India, he employed the motif on the arches of most of his buildings, perhaps as a reminder of his origins. There was, of course, no reason for the builders to follow a single version of the design, as the earlier Iranian buildings must have displayed a variety of forms, as also seen on the coins.

The immediate descendants of Hasan Bahman Shah appear to have remained familiar with the significance of the form, and for several generations the main components of the motif continued in use without much alteration, but gradually the design became more decorative. Examples can be found in the later Bahmani buildings of Gulbarga, even before the transfer of the capital to Bidar. An example of the motif at a transitional stage can be found in the tomb known as the Chor Gunbad. The building is a square domed chamber with four chatries (small domed pavilions) on the corners of the roof.[47] The arches of the chatries are crowned with the motif (fig. 17) which already shows departures from the traditional form, and while the foliated wings are comparable with the earlier Bahmani examples, they flank a motif similar to a fleur-de-lis, somewhat like that used in the Great Mosque of Qairawan. The similarity must be a coincidence, but it is interesting that the crescent and disk in both cases evolved to a fleur-de-lis. Inside the tomb the

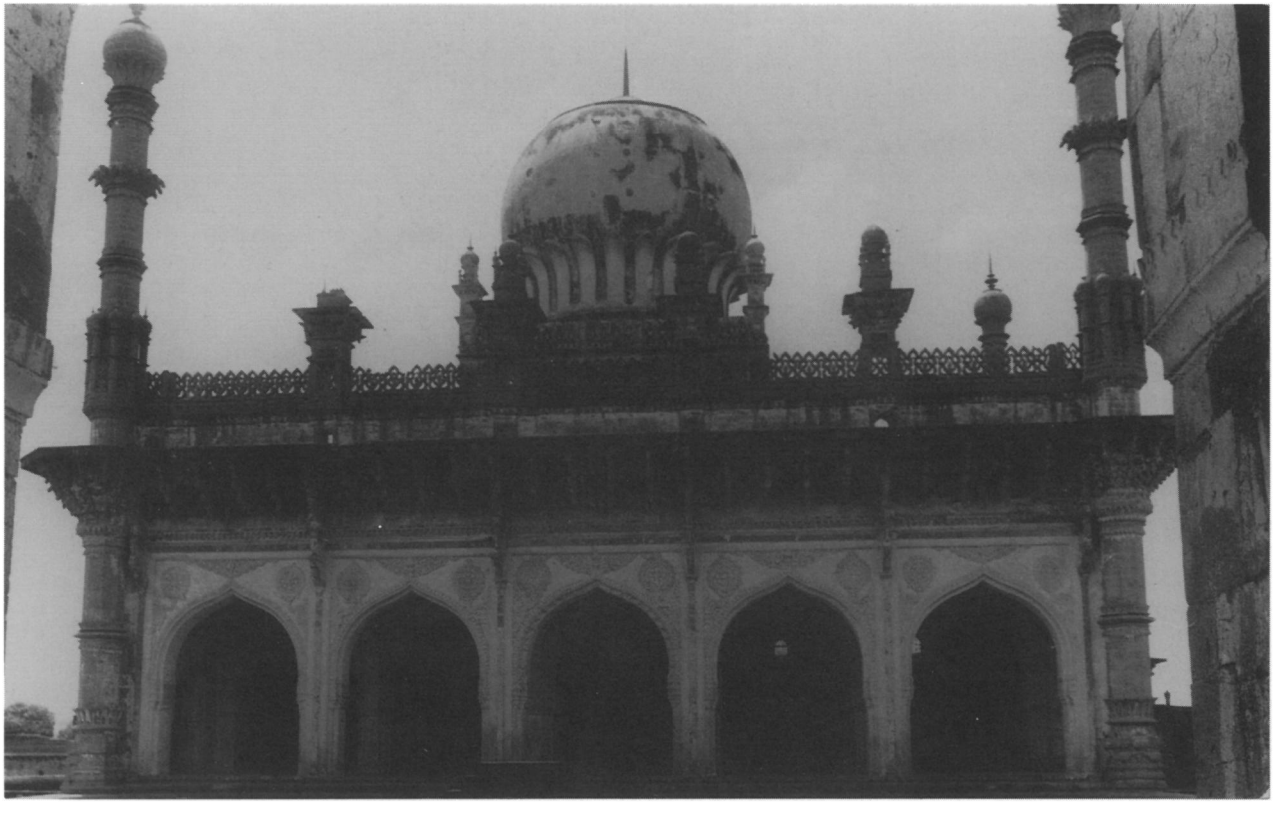

Fig. 21. Bijapur. Mosque of the Tomb of Ibrahim Shah.

building has preserved its fine stucco paintings, which are executed in red and include a triple band of floral motifs around the dome, and the familiar winged motif crowning the arches (fig. 18). Here the motif has still preserved the crescent, but the wings and the circle inside the crescent are filled with foliation. In the tomb of Ahmad Shah Wali,[48] the first of the royal tombs of Bidar (fig. 19) after the transfer of the capital from Gulbarga, the original components of the motif are all absent, and the form is transformed to a purely decorative arabesque motif (fig. 20). The form of the tomb itself is far removed from the early Bahmani tombs, which had a *chahār tāq* layout with massive plain walls and squat domes.

Instead, Ahmad Shah's tomb is a large building with small entrances in the center of the walls, which on the exterior are divided into three tiers of niches. The dome is further elevated by being set on a high octagonal drum. By this time the Bahmani dynasty was firmly established as a recognized power in central India, and the sultans no longer needed to rely on doubtful and distant noble origins for their legitimacy. The allusions to the Sasanian royal emblems were no longer a matter of prime concern.

The tradition of crowning the arch with the later version of the winged pattern, however, survived in central India for many centuries, and continued to be employed in the post-Bahmani buildings of the ᶜAdil Shahis and Barid Shahis. The idea was even imitated in the later buildings of the Vijayanagar kings, the arch enemies of the Bahmanis.[49] In the later buildings of the Deccan, as can be seen in the mosque of the tomb of Ibrahim ᶜAdil Shah (1535–57) (fig. 21), the original components of the pattern, the wings, the crescent, and the disk hardly ever appear again and the motif, now always made up of arabesques, gradually increases in size until it fills the upper part of the soffit of the arch. In the seventeenth century the form was treated by the central Indian builders as an integral part of the decoration of an arch. Variations of the later motif appear in almost all ᶜAdil Shahi buildings of Bijapur,[50] and in Gulbarga one of the latest examples of the motif is found in the Nizam Shahi tomb known as Chand Bibi.[51] Only in the eighteenth century, after

Aurangzeb's domination of the Deccan, do the buildings of the region begin to come under the influence of Mughal architecture, in which this central Indian motif is not displayed.

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NOTES

1. The fourteenth- and fifteenth-century miniatures show the Sasanian emperors in contemporary Islamic costume with turbans or Turkish-style hats. When they are shown with a crown, the form of the crown seems to be that of the contemporary sultans, and the Sasanian symbols are never present. For example, see Laurence Binyon, J. V. S. Wilkinson, and Basil Gray, *Persian Miniature Painting* (London, 1933), pls. 12, 15–17, 25, 27; Thomas W. Arnold and Adolf Grohmann, *The Islamic Book* (London-Leipzig, 1929), pl. 43; Norah M. Titley, *Persian Miniature Painting and Its Influence on the Art of Turkey and India* (London, 1983), pl. 3, fig. 26; Glenn D. Lowry and Susan Nezamee, *A Jeweller's Eye* (Seattle-London, 1988), pls. 13, 14, 16.
2. Art historians of Islamic India, probably unfamiliar with Sasanian motifs, have usually overlooked the Bahmani winged motif. For example, see Elizabeth Schotten Merklinger, *Indian Islamic Architecture, the Deccan 1347–1686* (Warminster, 1981), p. 95.
3. ʿIṣāmī, *Futūḥ al-salāṭīn,* ed. A. Mahdi Husain (Agra, 1938), p. 9; Khwāja Niẓām al-Dīn Aḥmad, *Tabaqāt-i Akbarī,* 3 vols. (Calcutta, 1935), 3: 2. Firishta records that he had seen many tales about the origin of Hasan Gangu, and gives a version in which Hasan appears as a poor man in the service of a court astrologer called Gangu Bahman. According to the story, the astrologer gave Hasan a piece of land to live on, and one day his plough hit a pot of gold, which he took to his master untouched. Bahman Gangu spoke of Hasan's honesty to the then prince Muhammad b. Tughluq, who in turn introduced Hasan to the sultan, his father, Ghiyath al-Din Tughluq Shah, who raised Hasan to the post of a low-ranking commander (*amīr sada*). His master, who had perceived Hasan's bright future in his horoscope, asked him to add the name of Gangu Bahman to his name so that, together with the name Hasan, Gangu Bahman would also become an eternal name, and Hasan accepted his master's wish early in his career. Elsewhere, however, Firishta follows the account of the other historians: that the commanders chose Hasan for the throne as he was a descendant of the legendary Bahman. See Muḥammad Qāsim Hindū Shāh known as Firishta, *Tārīkh-i Firishta,* 2 vols. (Lucknow, 1864), 1: 273–74, 277. The various rumors may have been partly responsible for Hasan's insistence on publicizing his claim by every means at his disposal.
4. According to ʿAlī b. ʿAzīz'ullāh Ṭabāṭabā, *Burhān-i maʾāthir* (Delhi, 1936), pp. 11–12, quoting the *ʿUyūn al-tawārīkh* and genealogies, Ḥasan Gāngu was the son of Kaykāwūs Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Ḥasan b. Bihnām b. Saymūn b. Salām b. Nūḥ b. Ibrāhīm b. Naṣīr b. Manṣūr b. Nūḥ b. Ṣāniʿ b. Bahrām b. Shahrīn b. Shād b. Nūshīn b. Dāwūd b. Bahrām Gūr.
5. A. D. H. Bivar, "The Allegory of Astyages," *Acta Iranica* 12 (1988): 516–17.
6. Muḥammad b. ʿAbdullāh called Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Tuḥfat al-nuẓẓār fī gharāʾib al-amṣār wa ʿajāʾib al-asfār,* ed. Talal Harb (Beirut, 1987), p. 553. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa confuses Bahrām Gūr (Varahran V) and Bahrām Chūbīn, the rebellious commander of Hormazd IV and records "the amir of that town was Fīrūz Badakhshānī, a descendant of Bahrām Gūr who was a courtier of the Kisrā."
7. Ibid., p. 522. Amīr Fīrūz may be the same as, or a relative of, Amir Karāy, as Ibn Baṭṭūṭa mentions that Karāy was also from Badakhshān.
8. Ibid., pp. 478–81.
9. For example see the cases of Shaykh Hūd and Ṭāhir b. Sharīf al-Mulk Amīr Bakht in ibid., pp. 490–91, 507–9. Sharīf al-Mulk himself survived severe punishment, but was later forgiven and made governor of Chanderi.
10. The tombs bear no historical inscriptions, and views differ as to the attribution of the tombs to particular sultans. See H. K. Sherwani, *The Bahmanis of the Deccan* (Hyderabad, Deccan, 1953), pp. 67–68.
11. For a photograph of the building, see G. Yazdani, *Report of the Archaeological Department of His Exalted Highness the Nizam's Dominions, 1925–6* (Calcutta, 1928), p. 2, pl. 7; also see Elizabeth Merklinger, "Gulbarga," *Islamic Heritage of the Deccan,* ed. George Michell (Bombay, 1986), p. 30.
12. Ibid., pls. 12–13.
13. Furdoonjee D. J. Paruck, *Sasanian Coins* (Bombay, 1924), pl. 15, no. 345; pl. 16, nos. 347, 353; M. I. Mochiri, *Etude de numismatique iranienne sous les Sassanides et Arabe-Sassanides,* 2 vols. (Tehran, 1977), 2: figs. 248–50, 551–52, 988.
14. Edith Porada, *Ancient Iran* (London, 1962), p. 201; also see Robert Goble, "Sasanian Coins," in *The Cambridge History of Iran,* vol. 3, 1 (Cambridge, 1983), p. 325.
15. A. U. Pope, ed. *A Survey of Persian Art,* rev. ed., 14 vols. (London, 1964–67), 2: 879.
16. André Parrot, *Nineveh and Babylon,* trans. Stuart Gilbert and James Emmons (London, 1961), pp. 34–35, fig. 39a.
17. Ibid., figs. 39 b–c, 40 a–c.
18. Ibid., p. 71, fig. 79.
19. Ibid., pp. 77–79, figs. 86–89.
20. Herzfeld believed that the winged ring represents the sun god; see E. Herzfeld, *Iran in the Ancient East* (Oxford, 1941, repr. London-New York, 1988), pp. 254–55.
21. *Mémoires de la Mission archéologique de Perse,* 20 (Paris, 1928), pp. 91–95; Roland G. Kent, *Old Persian* (New Haven, Conn., 1953), pp. 154–55.
22. Franz Cumont, *Textes et monuments figurés relatifs aux mystères de Mithra,* 2 vols. (Brussels, 1889), 1: 230, n. 6.
23. C. Edward Sachau, *The Chronology of Ancient Nations: An English Version of the Āthār-ul-bākiya of Albiruni* (London, 1879), pp. 207–8.
24. Muḥammad Ḥusain b. Khalaf Tabrīzī, *Burhān-i qāṭiʿ,* 5 vols. (Tehran, 1963), 4: 2062.
25. Kurt Erdmann, "Das Datum des Tak-i Bustan," *Ars Islamica* 4 (1937): 79–97; R. Ghirshman, *Iran: Parthians and Sassanians* (London, 1962), p. 193. Herzfeld and Reuter attribute Taq-i Bustan to Khusrau II, see Ernst Herzfeld, "Khusrau Parwez und der Ṭāq-i Vastān," *Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* 9 (1938): 91–158; O. Reuther in Pope, *Survey of Persian Art,* 2: 525–27, 7: 159–60; also see Hubertus von Gall, "Globus oder Discus auf der Krone Hosrow II," *Acta Iranica* (1984): 179–90. I am inclined to agree with Erdmann's view, as the two known crowns of Khusrau on his coins differ distinctly from the crown of the emperor at Taq-i Bustan. The earlier crown has the

moon surmounted by a ball of fire, but has no wings, while in the later crown the wings are present, but the globe is replaced by a star. For a wider discussion on the identity of the emperor at Taq-i Bustan and a full bibliography, see Johanna Domela Movassat, *The Large Vault at Taq-i Bustan* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1991), pp. 10–14, 28–32; for detailed photographs of the crown at Taq-i Bustan, see Shinji Fukai and Kiyoharu Horiuchi, *Ṭāq-i Bustān,* 2 vols. (Tokyo, 1972), 2: pls. 1–9.

26. Paruck, *Sasanian Coins,* tables 7, 9, 22–4, pls. 10–12, 19–20.
27. Ibid., tables 19–21, pls. 17–18; M. I. Mochiri, *Etude de numismatique iranienne,* p. 265, figs. 748–60.
28. Yt. V (*Ābān yasht*), 2–6.
29. Yt. VI (*Māh yasht*), 3–7.
30. George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art* (London, 1955), pp. 55, 59, 163.
31. The crescent moon as a royal and religious emblem of the later Sasanian period was also known to the Muslim historians. For example, Ḥamza Isfahānī, *Tārīkh sinī mulūk al-arḍ wa al-anbiāʾ* (Berlin, 1844), p. 35, mentions that a gold crescent was set on the crown of Bahrām b. Bahrām, and Yāqut, *Muʿjam al-Buldān,* 6 vols. (Leipzig, 1866–70), 3 (1868): 355, notes that above the fire temple of Shīz there was a silver crescent which people believed had supernatural powers.
32. Paruck, *Sasanian Coins,* table 1, pls. 2–3; also see the bas relief of the investiture of Ardashir I at Naqsh-i Rustam in Ghirshman, *Iran: Parthians and Sassanians,* p. 132, pl. 168.
33. Paruck, *Sasanian Coins,* table 10, pls. 7–8; also see the bas reliefs of Bahram II at Naqsh-i Rustam and Sar Mashhad in R. Ghirshman, *Iran: Parthians and Sassanians,* pp. 172–74, pls. 214–16.
34. Paruck, *Sasanian Coins,* 61, table 11, pl. 13; M. I. Mochiri, *Etude de numismatique iranienne,* figs. 90–93, 244–45, 1130–35.
35. Paruck, *Sasanian Coins,* 61, table 12, pls. 14–15; M. I. Mochiri, *Etude de numismatique iranienne,* figs. 26–29, 544–45, 727–28, 1136–39.
36. Apart from the Taq-i Bustan carving, see Paruck, *Sasanian Coins,* table 15, pls. 15–16; M. I. Mochiri, *Etude de numismatique iranienne,* figs. 249–50, 551–52, 987–88, 1144, 1287–98. An earlier crown of Piruz I did not have the wings, ibid., figs. 549–50, 935–36, 1143.
37. Paruck, *Sasanian Coins,* table 28–30, pl. 21; Mochiri, *Etude de numismatique iranienne,* figs. 899–924, 1069–1108, 1218–66.
38. Yt. VIII (*Tīshtar yasht*), 1.
39. Yt. VIII, 4–5, 8–9.
40. H. Nelson Wright, *Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta* (Oxford, 1907), vol. 2, pt. 1, pp. 196–99; pt. 2, pl. 8; for a bibliography of Bahmani coins, see C. R. Singhal, *Bibliography of Indian Coins,* vol. 2 (Bombay, 1952), pp. 37–42. It should be noted that coins with the portrait of the ruler are not unusual in the Islamic world, and have been seen in the period of the Seljuqs and their successors, as well as later in India during the time of the Mughals; see Gille Hennequin, *Catalogue des monnais musulmanes de la Bibliothèque National, Asie Pré-Mongole, les Salğūqs et leur successeurs* (Paris, 1983), pls. 8–14; Stanley Lane Poole, *The Coins of the Moghul Emperors of Hindustan in the British Museum* (London, 1892), pl. 9.
41. Pope, *Survey of Persian Art,* 7: 146; Ghirshman, *Iran: Parthians and Sassanians,* p. 124, pl. 162.
42. Arthur Upham Pope, *Persian Architecture* (London, 1965), p. 61, fig. 49; Ghirshman, *Iran: Parthians and Sassanians,* p. 140, pl. 179.
43. Pope, *Survey of Persian Art,* 7: pl. 145 G.
44. *Archaeological Survey of Ceylon,* 1 (1924): pl. 76, no. 218.
45. First reported in *Indian Antiquary,* 2 (1873): 273–74, and 3 (1874): 308–16. For a more recent reading of the St. Thomas inscription and a photograph of the cross, see Gerd Gropp, "Die Pahlavi-Inschrift auf dem Thomaskreuz in Madras," *Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* 3 (1970): 267–71, pl. 118. The photograph is, however, too small to show the details of the wings. My figure of the cross is after an early engraving published by Henry Yule in his translation of *The Book of Ser Marco Polo, the Venetian, Concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels of the East,* 3rd ed., 2 vols. (London, 1903), 2: 353.
46. K. A. C. Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture,* 2 vols. (Oxford, 1940), 2: pl. 89d.
47. *Archaeological Survey of India Annual Reports* (1918–19), pt. 1, p. 12; Merklinger, *Indian Islamic Architecture,* pp. 11, 111, fig. 6.
48. G. Yazdani, *Bidar, Its History and Monuments* (Oxford, 1947), pp. 114–28, pls. 68–75.
49. See, for example, the arches of the Lotus Mahal in George Michell, "Architectural Traditions at Vijayanagara," *Vijayanagara — City and Empire, New Currents of Research,* ed. A. L. Dallapiccola, 2 vols. (Wiesbaden, 1985), 1: 108–9, 2: 126–27.
50. For the buildings of Bijapur, see Henry Cousins, *Bijapur and Its Architectural Remains,* Archaeological Survey of India, Imperial Series, vol. 37 (Bombay, 1916); the tomb and mosque of Ibrahim Shah, pp. 70–77, pls. 43–54.
51. *Annual Report of the Archaeological Department of His Exalted Highness the Nizam's Dominions for the year 1934–5* (Calcutta, 1938), p. 6, pl. 4.